




DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY/PROCEDURE

SUBJECT HEARING IMPAIRED MENTAL HEALTH ACCESS	POLICY NO. 202.17	EFFECTIVE DATE 02/15/06	PAGE 1 of 3
APPROVED BY:  Director	SUPERSEDES 202.17 01/01/01	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 09/01/93	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 2

PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) policy regarding access to directly operated and contract mental health services to clients with mental illness and hearing impairment and to establish standard procedures to utilize translation/interpretation services to aid in their treatment and care.

POLICY

- 2.1 In accordance with applicable Federal, State and County policies and agreements, DMH shall provide equal access to services for clients with mental illness and hearing impairment at all Los Angeles County directly operated and contract clinic programs.
- 2.2 Staff having client contact shall review this policy annually in order to become familiar with utilization of interpretation services and to become sensitive to the needs of clients with hearing impairment. Supervisors shall document this review.
- 2.3 Interpretation services are available at no cost to clients with hearing impairment.
- 2.4 DMH staff proficient in American Sign Language (ASL) will be identified and utilized to provide services to the hearing impaired as appropriate to their service site assignments.
- 2.5 Sign language interpretation/translation services are available Monday through Friday, after-hours and on weekends. Interpretation services are available via the DMH agreement with LIFESIGNS.

PROCEDURE

3.1 STAFF ACCESS, Non-Emergency Sign Language Interpreter Service

The DMH Program Support Bureau ASL Interpreter Service Coordinator shall coordinate all STAFF requests for sign language interpreter services. DMH and contractor staff must contact the Program Support Bureau ASL Interpreter Service Coordinator at 213-381-8353, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to receive authorization to access service from LIFESIGNS. After-hours and on weekends, staff may contact LIFESIGNS directly at 800-633-



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8883. LIFESIGNS requires a three-day notice prior to dispatching an interpreter for non-emergency counseling service.

3.1.1 Staff must notify the Program Support Bureau ASL Interpreter Service Coordinator on the next business day of all after-hours and weekend requests.

3.2 STAFF ACCESS – **EMERGENCY** Sign Language Interpreter Services

Emergency interpretation/translation services are available by contacting the DMH Program Support Bureau, ASL Interpreter Service Coordinator at 213-381-8353 Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After-hours and on weekends staff should contact LIFESIGNS Emergency Services at 800-633-8883.

3.2.1 Staff must notify the Program Support Bureau ASL Interpreter Service Coordinator on the next business day of all after-hours and weekend emergency interpreter requests.

3.3 HEARING IMPAIRED PUBLIC ACCESS, Mental Health Services

Access to DMH services information by the hearing impaired public is available via a typewriter-telephone (TTY/TDD) device, telephone number 562-651-2549, installed in and staffed by the 24-hour DMH ACCESS Telecommunication Center/Emergency Outreach Bureau. ACCESS Center staff is available 24 hours, 7 days per week to provide mental health services information and referral options.

3.3.1 TTY/TDD devices are also available through special hearing-impaired contract services providers:

Greater Los Angeles Council on Deafness, Ind. (G.L.A.D.)
St. John's Hospital Hearing Impaired Program

3.4 DMH and contractor staff can make calls to and take calls from any client with hearing impairment in Los Angeles County with the assistance of the California Relay Service (CRS). This Statewide service of the telephone company, free to all users, facilitates communication via a centrally located telephone interpreter. Calls from standard DMH and contractor office telephones to clients with hearing impairments and who possess TTY/TDD telephone-typewriter devices can be accessed by linking via the CRS at 800-735-2922. Similarly clients with hearing impairment using personal TTY/TDD may call mental health offices via this CRS linking service.

3.5 Signs in English and other languages, denoting the TTY/TDD telephone numbers for the DMH 24 Hour ACCESS Program and for the California Relay Service shall be posted in each directly operated and contract service site.



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AUTHORITY

Voluntary Compliance Agreement OCR 09-89-3143/US
Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights

REVIEW DATE

This policy shall be reviewed on or before February 2011.